

MINUTES
HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 11, 2021

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW20

MEMBERS: Chairman Wood, Vice Chairman Vander Woude, Representatives Gibbs, Blanksma, Kingsley, Christensen, Lickley, Erickson, Ferch, Mitchell, Chew, Rubel, Davis

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained with the minutes in the committee secretary's office until the end of the session. Following the end of the session, the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

Chairman Wood called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Lickley** made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 9 and 10, 2021, meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

H 315: **Rep. Caroline Nilsson Troy**, District 5, presented **H 315**. This legislation is in response to incoming opioid lawsuit settlement funds. The funds will be distributed through legislative appropriation and used for opioid abuse recovery and prevention programs. The Idaho Behavioral Health Council, whose membership includes all branches of government, is designated as the funding recommendation source. Because the first money is due in sixty days, an emergency is declared and the legislation would become effective upon passage and approval. A sunset date is included of July 29, 2024.

Answering committee questions **Rep. Troy** said the first settlement of \$2.3M is enroute to Idaho. The second settlement is estimated to provide \$20M to Idaho. The Idaho Behavioral Health Council is obtaining stakeholder input to obtain a complete perspective of the scope of the crisis for the immediate and long term use of the funds.

For the record no one indicated their desire to testify in person or remotely.

MOTION: **Rep. Chew** made a motion to send **H 315** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Troy** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 316: **Seth Grigg**, Executive Director, Idaho Association of Counties, presented **H 316**. This legislation is a result of Medicaid expansion's impact on county medical indigent programs and the state catastrophic health care program. The program eligibility is limited to individuals who do not qualify for Medicaid or health insurance. Commitment proceedings are updated to exclude persons qualifying for Medicaid or health insurance prior to commitment.

The state's funding obligation to the Public Health Districts (PHDs) will reduce and funding from the counties will increase. This insures the PHDs continue to function in the same way without restriction.

Clarification is made regarding the Health District Board salary authority. Other changes ensure agreements between health districts and state agencies continue, stipulate Health District Budget Committee chairmen absence designees, and clarify the apportionment ability of the Budget Committee. Upon approval of this legislation the eligibility changes become effective. The balance of the legislation changes become effective January 1, 2022, in alignment with county budgets and fiscal year.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Grigg** said the counties spend, historically, \$20M per year on indigent funding. Continuing costs will include county-level administrative expenses and any qualifying individuals who need the program. Individuals are expected to make repayment through liens and payment plans, requiring an administrative structure for fund collection. The full state and counties savings could be delayed while current ongoing accounts are closed. An initial appropriation drop to \$8.5M is expected, with additional savings to follow.

Mr. Grigg answered further, this legislation stipulates the county appropriations will continue using the current share formula, unless an alternative appropriation manner is agreed upon. An individual who does not qualify for county or state assistance would have to negotiate with the hospital.

Bill Leake, Trustee, Eastern Idaho PHD 7, Member, Idaho Association of the District Boards of Health, testified **in support of H 316**. This enables the PHDs to meet the needs and desires of their local communities.

Brian Whitlock, representing the Idaho Hospital Association, testified **without position to H 316**. This legislation sends a strong message asking Idahoans to be responsible for their health care. Many persons have to wait until November's open enrollment to apply for coverage which is effective January 1st. This will cause a six-month gap for those wanting to make the lifestyle choice change and have coverage. He suggested an implementation delay to protect those individuals. In response to committee questions, Mr. Whitlock said there will be some financial impact to rural hospitals. Financial determinations are made after treatment has been provided.

Michael Kane, representing the Idaho Association of Health District Boards, reported the Board trustees voted unanimously **in support of H 316** and have been active participants in the drafting of this legislation. The state and the Division of Human Resources will no longer play a role in the independent district decisions. The Departments of Health and Welfare and Environmental Quality relationships will be through agreements with the counties.

Elt Hasbrouck, Board Chairman, Valley Health Districts, Trustee, Health District 4, testified **in support of H 316**. This legislation returns local control, which is a more efficient process. Some programs will be maintained and kept viable. In most cases, individuals complete eligibility paperwork. Most denials were caused when persons did not come in for their interviews.

For the record no one else indicated their desire to testify in person or remotely.

Mr. Griggs answered further questions. He stated when the exchange enrollment is closed, persons can still purchase private marketplace insurance without the subsidy. He indicated delay of implementation until January 1st is a better option than amending the legislation.

MOTION:

Rep. Rubel made a motion to send **H 316** to General Orders.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Vander Woude made a substitute motion to send **H 316** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Committee discussion included clarification and amending the legislation implementation, the resulting fiscal impact, redrafting the legislation, the three years of conversations to develop this plan, health exchange allowance for life changing events, and the availability of loans through hospitals.

**VOTE ON
SUBSTITUTE
MOTION:**

Chairman Wood called for a vote on the substitute motion to send **H 316** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Vander Woude** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

HCR 14:

Rep. Tammy Nichols, District 11, presented **HCR 14**. This legislation affirms the Legislature's recognition of the protection of personal liberty and fundamental human rights. It also states no mandate or mechanism in Idaho law would ever permit or justify the use of forced immigrations, vaccinations, inoculations, or genetic modulations, even during times of exigency or emergency. It sets forth the Legislature's opposition to any efforts to require, mandate, or force any person to receive immunizations, vaccinations, inoculations, medical procedure, or genetic modulations.

Del Chapel, Rosa Martinez, Blake Miller, Monica Miller, Alicia Peterson, Lorna Mitson, Steven Keyser, Eva Selleck, Margie Baker, Casey Baker, Jessica Marcu, Claudia Frent, Adrien Marcu, Monica McKinley, Beverly Kingsford, Mary Banford, Sabrina Napolitano, and Dr. Lynn Laird, testified in support of **HCR 14**.

The above-listed individuals expressed concerns regarding the strength of this legislation, retention of their personal freedom of choice, use of consent for other medical procedures, existing vaccination options for only school aged children, unknown consequences of required vaccinations, maintaining body autonomy, blanket prescribing of vaccines, availability of medical vaccine exemptions, false accusations by persons in power, and repeating historical coercion in any form.

MOTION:

Rep. Christensen made a motion to send **HCR 14** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

In closing, **Rep. Nichols** said this is not only a concern for many Idahoans, but for those individuals moving to Idaho as a result of what has been forced on them in other states.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE:**

Rep. Christensen requested a roll call vote on **HCR 14**. **Motion carried by a vote of 11 AYE and 2 Absent/Excused. Voting in favor of the motion: Reps. Wood, Vander Woude, Kingsley, Christensen, Lickley, Erickson, Ferch, Mitchell, Chew, Rubel, Davis. Reps. Gibbs and Blanksma were absent/excused. Rep. Nichols** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Representative Wood
Chair

Irene Moore
Secretary